

Happy Valentine's Day!

# Eagle Times

Volume 40, Number 3 February 2023

Bonny Eagle High School

Standish, Maine 04084

## Mr. Oyster receives and sends good vibes at BEMS

By Caleb Babb and staff reports

This coming April, Mr. Lowell Oyster, Assistant Principal of Bonny Eagle Middle School, will be honored by the Maine Principal's Association as Maine's National Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year.

Mr. Oyster learned that he had won the award at a surprise assembly at the middle school in early December. According to MPA Executive Director Dr. Holly Blair, Mr. Oyster won Maine's National Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year because of his strong emphasis on community outreach. This includes being part of the Maine Principals' Association and National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP).

"He is a reflective educational leader who people seek out and look to for guidance and leadership," Dr.

Blair said. "Mr. Oyster focuses on the strengths of the people he works with to lift and accentuate each team member, making the overall school community stronger."

Mr. Oyster has been an assistant principal for six years. He started his educational career as a math/science teacher at Bonny Eagle Middle School in 2007.

During this time, he took on the following school and/or district level leadership positions: Clan Leader, Symposium Leader, Math Meet Coordinator, Continuous Improvement Team member, Certification Steering Committee member, and was the 7th grade baseball coach.

Mr. Oyster says his favorite part of being the Assistant Principal is that, "Every day is different. I never really know what my day has in store for me



Mr. Lowell Oyster is being honored for his role at BEMS. Photo by Lori Napolitano

when I wake up. It keeps you on your toes, and you get a lot of good vibes and good energy from working with middle school students and staff."

Mr. Oyster adds that his inspirations are the school staff he works with and

his family, including his wife and two daughters. He will be honored by the MPA on April 27 during its annual awards banquet at the Spring Conference at the Samoset Resort in Rockport.

## Black History Month is important, now more than ever



This statue of Harriet Tubman in Harlem pays homage to an important figure in Black history. Photo by denisbin, CC by ND 2.0

By Amelia McAvoy

The history of Black History Month begins in 1926 with the Black historian, Carter G. Woodson. Woodson established the second week of February as "Negro History Week" as an attempt to make a celebration of Black history. He chose this week specifically because both Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas were born during it. Fifty years later, President Gerald R. Ford became the first president to recognize Black History Month, and it has been observed nationally ever since.

At Bonny Eagle, the Civil Rights Team celebrates Black History Month annually within the school community as a part of their bulletin board project. The bulletin board, which is located across from the cafeteria, celebrates different calendar observances in celebration of marginal-

ized groups. This year, for Black History Month, they are in the process of filling the bulletin with quotes from prominent African-American figures, both historical and contemporary. They also plan to have a couple of announcements every week for the rest of February where they share quotes.

However, the Civil Rights Team is looking for input from the school community. They are looking for students to share African-American figures they find inspirational that they can incorporate into their celebration. To participate, look for QR codes that will be posted around the school. Scanning the QR code will bring you to a Google Form where you can suggest a famous African-American

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The purpose of the *Eagle Times* is to:

a.) Present the news, as it pertains to the student body, in a non-biased and tasteful fashion,

b.) Provide a forum, wherein ideas and options, concepts and concerns may be freely and openly discussed,

c.) Provide the student body, faculty, and administration with a circulated medium in which letters, notices of recognition, and other submissions may be published.

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## Let go of guilt about New Year's resolutions

By Amelia McAvoy

Every year, to celebrate another trip around the sun, people across the globe resolve to adopt better habits in the new year. According to *The Old Farmers Almanac*, this long standing tradition began with the Babylonians in ancient times. Rather than promising to lose weight or save money, common Babylonian resolutions included paying off their debts and returning borrowed farming equipment.

In the past 4,000 years, New Year's resolutions have changed quite a bit. *Forbes Health* provides the most popular resolutions for 2023, which are to improve finances, to improve mental health, and to lose weight. Improving mental health is a common goal amongst many Americans, regardless of age. Uniquely, Gen Z prioritized learning a new skill and making more time for hobbies. Millennials were more focused on improving finances over other generations. More members of Gen X resolved to lose weight than members of any other generation.

However, whatever your goal may be for the new year, the truth is that researchers have found that 80% of New Year's resolutions fail by February. Come February 1, the gym memberships are canceled, the diets forgotten, and the bottles are once again opened. But why is it that New Year's resolutions never end up working out?

There is no one concrete reason for why New Year's resolutions tend to fail, but there are multiple theories. Some people think it's because people start out too confident and set unrealistic goals. Others say



Many resolutions end up in the trash. Image by Viktor Hertz

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people don't have the right support group. Personally, I believe New Year's resolutions are doomed from the start because people aren't trying to change for themselves, but rather because they feel pressure to make a resolution.

The Dalai Lama is famously quoted as saying, "A genuine change must first come from within the individual."

For people to stick to their resolutions, they need to have the true desire to make change. All too often, people make resolutions because it is a societal expectation, not because they actually are determined to make that change in their life. In these instances, individuals quickly become disillusioned with their resolution because they aren't really committed to following through with it.

Another reason so many New Year's resolutions fail may be the timing. Firstly, the decision to make

changes in one's life does not happen at the same time for everyone. Individuals need to come to their own realization that they need to improve their life; they won't magically wake up on January 1 with this realization. New Year's resolutions may be on everyone's minds in January, but that doesn't mean everyone will feel prepared to change their lifestyle then.

Additionally, for those living in the Northern Hemisphere, winter can be a difficult time. Shorter days and colder weather are not inspiring conditions. Most people feel more sluggish in the winter, which makes it difficult for the large number of people who resolve to exercise more.

The new year can also be challenging mentally for some, making them less likely to want to put in the effort needed to stick to a resolution. The holidays are exhausting for everyone and can be a somber time for those without close family. Even just the passage to a new year can be emotional. It is natural that many would want to recuperate after the bustling holiday season.

Although New Year's is a fun holiday, I think New Year's resolutions are pointless for most people and we, as a society, should put less emphasis on them.

Making improvements in your life is always a good thing, but the pressure to improve each year only pushes people to fail at their goals. We should emphasize and appreciate positive changes all year long instead of pushing the narrative that we need to make big changes every January. Hopefully, by 2024 our old acquaintance, New Year's resolutions, will be forgotten.

## There's a dark side to Valentine's Day gift-giving

By Xochitl Pope

While many people think of Valentine's Day as being a holiday about expressing affection for their loved ones through gifts and chocolates, there is a dark truth behind where many of these treats come from.

Many of the gifts people buy their friends or significant others come from parts of the world where the workers are not treated fairly, which can sometimes result in death, especially among younger workers.

Even though the Human Rights Watch tries to keep things under control, many of these items associated with Valentine's Day are the result of workers working in unsafe conditions that are a violation of their human rights and safety.

Another fact that may be surprising to people is what the chocolate in many well known brands actually contains. Brands such as Hersheys and Dove contain harmful metals in their chocolates that can cause serious health problems later on in life;



Two brands of chocolate with harmful levels of lead and cadmium in some of their products. Staff photo

many studies have confirmed this, including one by Consumer Reports that found lead levels 264% higher than what is considered safe in some dark chocolate bars. The lead seems to get into the beans after they are harvested, suggesting that the manufacturing process is flawed.

On average, Americans spend around \$20 billion on Valentine's Day gifts each year, which only continues to support these harmful companies and their practices.

All of this does not mean that you

can't still get a meaningful gift for someone this Valentine's Day. You may just have to put a little more effort into your choice of chocolates or jewelry to make sure you are supporting a worthy business.

Making your own gifts for someone is also a great way to show your appreciation of them and how much they mean to you. Homemade cards and gifts are way more personal and end up meaning a lot more than a store bought present.



## Black History Month continued from page 1

important to Black history, a quote of theirs, and an explanation for how they have been impactful.

Ms. Beth Hayden, the Civil Rights Team advisor, believes the visibility the team works to provide to Black history is important because it can “help educate people and help people understand different perspectives.”

The team is hoping that by highlighting Black history, people will learn about the contributions of this group “and [the school] becomes more of a safe, welcoming community to everyone.”

In Ms. Hayden’s opinion, the work the Civil Rights Team put in this month to educate the school community about Black history is important because “the future is in the hands of our students. That’s really what it comes down to. So, if we can somehow help people stand back and think about where other people are coming from, they may see that saying a joke that has some bias in it is not really appropriate. Then, I think we end up making the world a better place.”

Not all classes at BEHS dedicate class time specifically to Black History Month, however some do. For example, Ms. Cyr, a social studies teacher, says Black History Month is critical “to fill in the gaps of education.” She makes an effort to incorporate Black history into



The BEHS Civil Rights Team is focusing on the words and deeds of Black Americans this month.  
Photo by Charlotte McAvoy

her classes.

In HerStory, a social studies elective, Ms. Cyr shares the perspectives of both white and Black American women throughout history.

“I try to tell the story of Black women who were brought to America and enslaved and their contributions to the Civil War [and] life after the Civil War. Then, one of my favorite parts is really when we dig into the Harlem Renaissance and I primarily focus on women,

but that also includes men and what life was like during that time,” she says.

In her government classes, Ms. Cyr teaches about the effects of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution on Black Americans as well the fight for legislative equality.

To Ms. Cyr, it is crucial that we as a society make more of a conscious effort to learn Black history. In her experience, the education system often doesn’t highlight the accomplishments of Black

men and women.

“We spend all this time talking about these wonderful white men, but we forget that there are people of color that have made amazing contributions to society,” she says.

However, the path to teaching more about Black history in schools won’t be easy. Across the country there has been pushback against education about minority groups.

Recently, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has made news for objecting to the teaching of College Board’s newest class in the state: AP African-American Studies.

Ms. Cyr fears attitudes like this arise because “people don’t want to hear the truth.” She adds, “We don’t want to face it, but I think we need to.”

But, in order to hear “the truth,” education is necessary. “Start by including Black men and Black women in our curriculum,” Ms. Cyr says, “Start bringing out more people through those avenues and start at a young age.”

After all, education was the reason behind the invention of Black History Month. Almost 100 years ago, Black History Month began with one Black historian fighting for observance of a week to celebrate Black history for that very reason: to educate about the accomplishments and struggles of African Americans.

## Mrs. Prescott has learned a lot of the angles as a mom and grandmother

By Joseph Greene and Andrew Bowers

I bet you would never guess that a teacher at Bonny Eagle High School owns a plane. Well, a fun fact about Mrs. Faye Prescott is that she and her husband own a twin-engine plane. Her husband has a pilot’s license and flies his plane for recreation. They’ve taken it to Calais, Maine and to New York, on occasion, but don’t use it for routine travel because “the cost of that would be too much.”

But Mrs. Prescott says the plane, which is stored at the Limington airport when not in use, is mostly her husband’s project. For herself, she is most

proud of her life as a teacher, a mom, and a grandmother. She has a Masters degree in both math and science. She states her greatest accomplishment as being “a mother and having great kids.”

Mrs. Prescott is thankful that she is able to visit her kids who live in other countries and she enjoys being able to travel. She delights in seeing her grandchildren and “learning from them.” She likes taking information from these encounters and applying it to her classroom.

Mrs. Prescott became a mother while pursuing an education to get her undergraduate degree. This caused her to have to find part-time work as a wait-

ress, while going to school part-time in order to provide for her children.

Mrs. Prescott has learned many things as a mother and has even applied some of these things to her teaching. Some of these things include, “just having a little bit of patience for students. I think that happens when you become a mom.”

She also explained how being a mother has allowed her to appreciate learning more, and to understand that learning takes time, which is okay.

For the future, Mrs. Prescott hopes to “continue to be a good teacher, and to continue to be a good wife, mother, and grandmother.”



Mrs. Prescott in the classroom.

File photo

## There’s still time to join the art club at Bonny Eagle

By Micah Puthoff and Chloe Edgecomb

While some students head to the gym and hallways after school, a few others have chosen to embrace their creativity. Some of these students can be found on Thursdays in Room 128. They are members of Bonny Eagle’s newest club.

Art club is a time for students to make whatever they please, whether that be painting, throwing clay on the wheel, or making jewelry.

“It’s free time making art,” says Mrs. Levesque, the club’s advisor.

Still, she provides some instruction. “I will sometimes demo specific things,” she says. “I will sometimes demonstrate how to throw on the wheel.”

Art club members are a variety of students, freshmen through seniors. In any given week, participation ranges from 5 to 30 students.

Parker Ward, a senior, is the president of the club. Even though Ward will be graduating early in a few months, he is

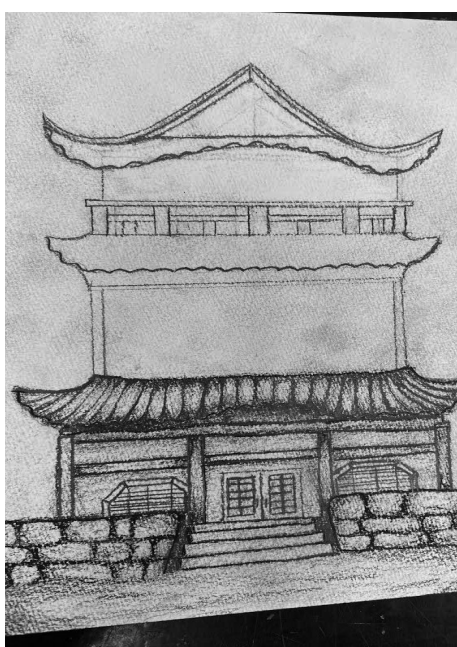


Created by Mariah Huntley

still enjoying his time in this new club.

“Everyone has an opportunity to be creative and learn about art in a different, more relaxed environment,” he says.

Next year’s presidents are Taylor Farwell and Eden Pollard. But don’t wait until next fall to join. Come check the club out this spring!



Created by Alex Russell

**Calling all  
BEHS artists  
and  
writers!**

**If you have artwork,  
poetry, or short fiction  
you’d like to have in-  
cluded in an upcoming  
Literary Arts section of  
the Eagle Times, send  
it to: [eagletimes@  
bonnyeagle.org](mailto:eagletimes@bonnyeagle.org)**

**Deadline  
for submissions  
is April 15.**



## It's BYOW for the foreseeable future at BEHS

By Boston Nobile

Five months after forever chemicals were prominently found in some Maine schools, the MSAD 6 district still shows unacceptable numbers of polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the drinking water throughout the Bonny Eagle schools.

The district facilities department is taking further steps to decrease the levels of PFAS. Unfortunately, the facilities department anticipates many more months of unusable drinking fountains.

In a School Board Meeting on December 5, 2022, Superintendent Clay Gleason informed the public that no important updates were available at that time. District officials are still waiting for Sevee & Maher Engineers (SME), an engineering firm, to develop the final designs on all water filtration systems for all schools in the district.

Once the filtration systems are completed, the superintendent will need to engage a contractor to do the installation work throughout the schools. Then, our water systems will undergo a final testing process to ensure it is keeping a safe level of 20 parts per trillion (ppt) in the water.

PFAS has become a well-known phenomenon, and not for a good reason. PFAS make their way into water sources through items that contain it, such as cleaning products and stain-resistant coating.

PFAS take such a long time to be removed from the water because they have such low reactivity and are very resistant to filtration systems. Maine has become

the nation's first state to ban pesticides, including PFAS/Forever Chemicals. The ban won't take effect until 2030 but is already planned to wipe more than 1,300 pesticides off the market.

Maryland and Massachusetts are currently contemplating whether to follow along with the ban or not, so Maine will most likely impact their decision depending on how well it works.

MSAD 6 was found to have some of the highest PFAS levels among Maine schools, so the district is working very hard to solve this problem.

Bonny Eagle Middle School has tested the highest with an inadequate 626 ppt found in October. Bonny Eagle High School tested with 55.7 ppt and had the least of the four schools that surpassed the 20 ppt standard.

In response to an email question, Mr. Adam Thibodeau, the MSAD 6 facilities director, said, "We took initial samples in August and then confirmation samples in September/October. The levels changed a bit but not significantly enough to be below the state recommendation of 20 ppt."

He went on to say, "We have also taken a quarterly sample per the notice from the ME Drinking Water Program and found the results to be similar to the first two. We have an engineering firm developing a design to install filtration systems at the four schools to remove the PFAS from the water. The team met today to review the findings of the study and recommendations. We are now in the process of getting MSAD admin and MEDWP to accept the recommenda-



Poland Springs saved the day by donating water when PFAS were discovered to be above safe levels last summer. The district is now buying water at a discount from Poland Springs until the new filtration system is installed.

Staff photo

tions...we then move into design of the system. From there we go into procurement of the material, equipment and contractors for the installation."

Since it will be a while until our water is back to normal, the superintendent has managed to get a discounted price on water supplied by Poland springs.

In addition, they spent around \$3,600

on 5-gallon water jugs after Poland Springs donated 1,200 5-gallon jugs and 14 pallets of water cases.

If the district didn't save on our water, the cost of having to buy the water at the total price would have been roughly \$5,400 more than what has been paid now.

## QR codes get mixed reviews at BEHS

By Joseph Greene and Andrew Bowers

Recently some departments in Bonny Eagle High School have switched over their way of setting appointments from physical to virtual methods. Guidance and nurse appointments are no longer walk-ins. Rather, students need to use QR codes.

Quick response codes, better known as QR codes, are designed to make websites or media more accessible. This issue has caused a divide between students, teachers, nurses, and counselors who already use the QR codes and those who don't.

Some students at Bonny Eagle prefer not to use the QR codes. Mike Mosely, a senior at Bonny Eagle, thinks "they are just useless. If I have an issue I will just knock on the door and walk-in."

That seems to be the majority opinion among BEHS students who were informally surveyed.

However, there are also many plus sides to this new system.

"It has reduced a lot of foot traffic in our office," said Darcy Jo-Tarr, a nurse at Bonny Eagle.

She says that it is very convenient and allows her to help kids who truly need help, rather than having to deal with a line of people just skipping classes. This new form of scheduling appointments with the nurses truly lets them get their job done and help those who need help, she explains.

The counselors also like this new form of scheduling appointments. It



Photo by Charlotte McAvoy

helps them connect more with their students and really form a bond with them.

"It allows students to discreetly sign up for times to meet us. There is still a stigma for students to have to come in and talk about their mental health" said Mr. Kahbir Edwards, one of the Bonny Eagle counselors.

What Mr. Edwards said makes sense. Students are hesitant to go see counselors in fear of what others will think about them. These QR codes give students the privacy they need to come in and get what they need off their chest in a safe space.

The QR codes are a good addition to the school. They are reliable for students, teachers, and nurses. Even though there may be some flaws, it will eventually "become as easily accessible as possible. So students can have their appointments," said Mr. Edwards.

## The Way of Water worth the wait

By Charlotte McAvoy

Avatar's sequel, *Avatar the Way of Water*, began premiering in theaters in December and, according to Variety Magazine, it has grossed \$636 million in the U.S. and \$2.174 billion worldwide, making it the third highest grossing film in history.

Jake and Neytiri's story continues from the first *Avatar*, which was released in Dec. 2009, and we are now introduced to the new family they have formed.

As an old threat appears back in their life, the family is now forced to explore the new regions of Pandora and say goodbye to their home in the Pandora forests. The family must then fight to stay together and survive while they take residence in an unfamiliar area inhabited by characters whose lives and livelihood revolve around the sea.

The new characters bring out a new heartwarming twist and show us new dynamics between characters. Although the characters made me happy, sad, and anxious all at the same time, the visual portion was definitely my favorite part. The graphics were so detailed and the setting was so colorful.

Lastly, the movie's pacing was well set up. It may be a long movie, but every scene seemed so important and provided breathtaking visuals. The movie made for a perfect experience with an intriguing mix of both action and uplifting but humorous dialogue. I genuinely loved this movie and it could definitely be labeled as one of the best releases in 2022.

In my opinion, this new action-



Avatar 2 was highly anticipated by movie goers as this poster outside a local cinema shows. Staff photo

packed, heartwarming movie is an easy five out of five stars and I encourage everyone to give it a watch.

Watching it in 3D only brought the graphics to life more and had me completely engulfed into the story. I would go so far as to argue that *Avatar the Way of Water* is even better than the original and I can't wait to see what they do for the next movie, which is scheduled to come out in Dec. 2024.

In addition, there are already plans in the works for *Avatars* 4 and 5.



## Fewer high school students seem willing to give sports a try

By Caiden Bailey

High school sports have been around for a long time, but with decreasing participation, some sports are finding it difficult to field a team.

“Our numbers are down in many sports,” says BEHS Athletic Director Eric Curtis. “My best guess is we are still feeling effects from the pandemic. For two years, middle school kids had very limited activities and may have found other activities to do instead of athletics.”

Mr. Curtis cites field hockey in the fall and girls basketball this winter as two examples. Girls basketball is supposed to have 12 players on varsity and 10 on JV, at the least, but this year, there are only 14 girls total. They have made it work by having players play both varsity and JV.

According to Girls Varsity Coach Danielle Pinkham, there are advantages and disadvantages to the declining numbers.

“We have adjusted, having combined practices, but it has allowed us to be a closer unit,” she explained.

Coach Pinkham, who took over the reins from Mr. Scott Regan this year, participated in many high school sports, including soccer, baseball, basketball, and dance. She even played softball all four years in col-



Coach Danielle Pinkham is working to increase participation in girls basketball. This year there are only 14 girls on varsity and JV basketball combined.



Photos by Lisa DeMarco

lege. She says the benefits of high school sports include: good life lessons, such as the importance of teamwork, pushing past your limits, and perseverance. She explains that you get all of these life lessons by playing a sport that you enjoy.

Still, the numbers make things challenging at times, especially if players are out sick or get injured. Some schools

and coaches are trying to increase participation by encouraging elementary and middle schoolers to get into sports so they have that experience going into high school.

Holding clinics for younger kids that uses varsity and JV players as helpers is also a key strategy.

“It all starts with younger ages. I

think girls need to see high schoolers as role models. We are trying to do more with our youth and middle school teams to get participation continuing from a younger age,” said Coach Pinkham. “It’s important to have an idol while playing a sport. It keeps pushing you to do better than you already are.”

Bonny Eagle isn’t the only school facing this situation. Lots of studies have shown that sports participation among high school-age youth has declined. Once recent national study concluded that participation levels had dropped 4 percent, even for football.

Because of other schools’ struggles, Bonny Eagle girls basketball has seen a few of its JV games cancelled and have had to pick up random teams to play as their scheduled games didn’t have enough players.

“Numbers being down, many schools are facing the same problem,” said Mr. Curtis. He always advises kids to give sports a try or to find a way to keep playing.

“You are only young once, and if you love the sport, continue it until you can’t anymore,” he says. “High school athletics give you so much more than the sport itself, including life skills and memories that you hold on to forever.”

## Free agent flurry: many baseball players changed teams this offseason

By Zachary Myers

We are leaning closer to opening day of the Major League Baseball season, and this offseason has certainly been interesting. There have been a number of big name signings and re-signings, but which of them will make the biggest impact?

Here are some of the best and biggest signings of 2022 and the ones I think will make the biggest impact.

The Boston Red Sox let their all-star shortstop, Xander Bogaerts, get away. He signed with the San Diego Padres for \$280 million over 11 years. But the Sox filled a big need by signing relief pitcher **Kenley Jansen**.

It seems like ages ago that the Red Sox won the World Series in 2018. Since then, they have been mired in an era of overall mediocrity. This is due in large part to their pitching, and specifically, to their bullpen, which had the fifth worst ERA of all bullpens last season.

Signing veteran reliever Jansen should positively impact this pitching staff. He is one of the best closers in Major League Baseball, having led the league in saves as an Atlanta Brave last season with 41 total, and previously making three consecutive All-Star teams with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Jansen also brings a veteran presence to the bullpen, as a majority of the Red Sox pitchers are under 30 and could benefit from his experience. While there are many more pieces that could be added, this is a positive step for a Red Sox team that attempts to compete in a stacked American League East division.

It seems like cheating that the reigning World Series champion Houston Astros signed one of the best players in the league, but here we are. **Jose Abreu** has been one of the best hitters in baseball, consistently batting .290 with 130 hits and 30 home runs per season.

one. They already have superstars Jose Altuve and Alex Bregman along with World Series MVP Jeremy Pena. Now they have officially bolstered their infield with Abreu, whose offensive and defensive prowess should allow the Astros to have a better chance to repeat their 2022 World Series winning season.

The New York Yankees may have made the biggest signing not just of this year, but possibly in the last 10 years. **Aaron Judge** has always been one of the best players since his rookie season, and this last season solidified this claim. He had one of the greatest MLB seasons ever, hitting an American League record 62 home runs along with 177 hits, 131 RBIs, and batting .311, leading the Yankees to an American League Championship Series appearance.

Even though New York already has a solid roster, Judge makes them a serious contender. With his ability to hit a home run nearly every other game, and with his 6 foot 7 inch stature to be able to jump for fly balls, he should be a force for many years to come.

The New York Mets have been wheeling and dealing, trying to build a World Series contender the past few years, signing veterans Starling Marte and Eduardo Escobar. When they lost their former Cy Young award-winning ace, Jacob deGrom, they had to sign the reigning champion, **Justin Verlander**.

After missing the last two seasons recovering from Tommy John surgery, Verlander rebounded in a massive way, going a league best 18-4 with a league leading 1.75 ERA along with 185 strikeouts in 2022.

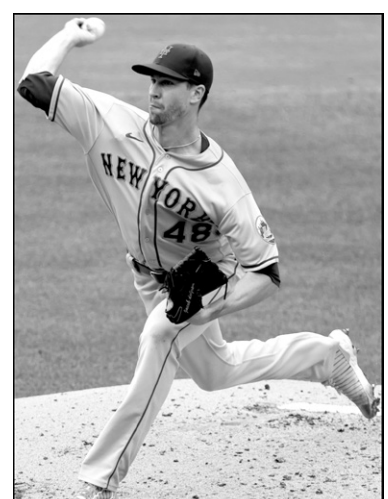
Even better, he is coming off another World Series win and hopefully he should bring that same power to the Mets. The Mets already have Max Scherzer, so now, with Verlander, they have solidified their rotation with two of the greatest pitchers of all time. The Mets should be in serious contention for the World Series this year.



Kenley Jansen now a Red Sox. Photo by Ian D'Andrea, Wikimedia Commons



Aaron Judge. Photo by Keith Allison, Wikimedia Commons



Jacob deGrom. Photo by All-Pro Reels, Wikimedia Commons

It was the Texas Rangers who stole **Jacob deGrom** from the Mets. The Rangers seem to be the one team in the AL West that wants to take down the Astros. They have made big name signings recently, with Corey Seager and Nathan Eovaldi being two, and now they have deGrom.

While he has missed some of the last couple of seasons with varying injuries, he is still one of the best pitchers of the last decade.

He consistently put up 10 wins with a sub 2.0 ERA while playing for a Mets team that didn’t give him very much run support. He has won back to back Cy Young awards and is likely to be a contender for this award for the foreseeable future. deGrom should lead the charge on a rapidly improving Rangers roster that should contend for a playoff berth this season and in the future.



## This video game is a winner for many good reasons

By Zachary Myers

It seems that every year Nintendo comes up with another successful Mario game, or some variation. This year is no different, as *Mario Kart 8 Deluxe* for the Nintendo Switch is the sixth highest selling video game of all time at 46 million copies, and for good reason. This game has it all, from new characters to a new game mode, and it is great for new and experienced video-game lovers.

*Mario Kart 8 Deluxe* is jam packed with content, as it has the widest selections of drivers in *Mario Kart* history.

There are the classics, such as Mario and Luigi, but you can also drive as Link from *Legend of Zelda*, the Inklings from *Splatoon*, and even race as your own Mii.

The speeds are also higher, as Nintendo made the addition of 200cc, which allows experienced racers to fly at incredible speeds down their favorite tracks. If they so desire, there are also slower speeds, such as 150cc down to a slow pace of 50cc.

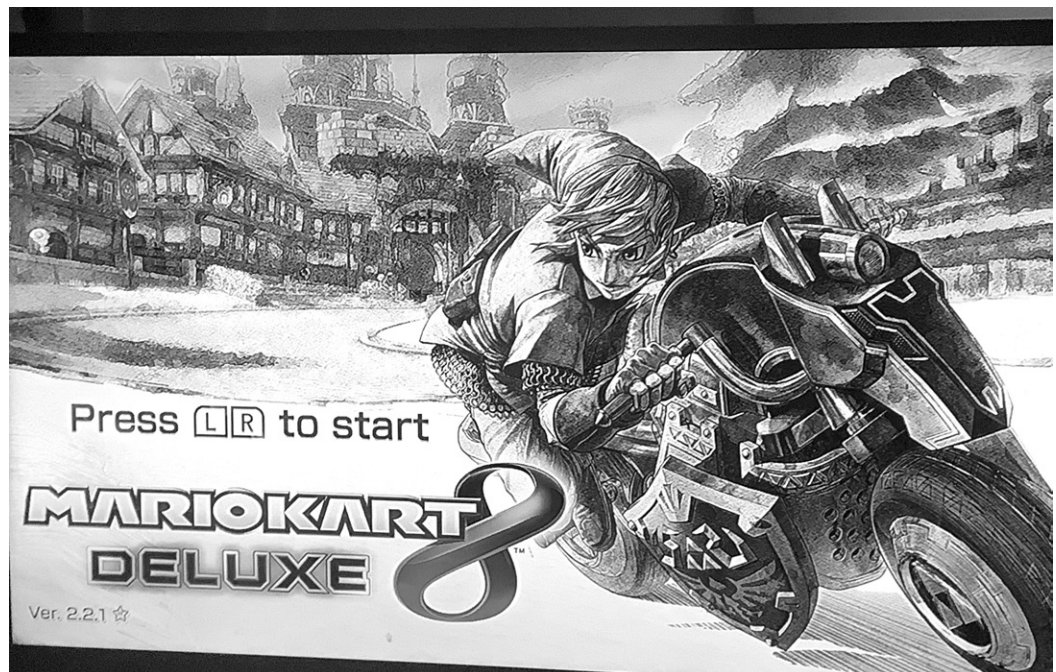
The first four cups are all new tracks, but the rest are full of vintage tracks, with some of the classics, including Grumble

Volcano from the Wii, Yoshi Valley from the N64, and Cheep Cheep Beach from the DS.

You can play these courses offline in cups, online with people from around the world, or in the same room with your family.

There are also many other different game modes, such as Time Trials. This is for people who want to see how fast they can travel around a track at a time, as you start with three fast mushrooms and you have to use them smartly to see if you can get the fastest time. You can even compare your scores with people around the world to see if you can get the fastest time.

There is still a battle mode but with different and brand new games. There is Shine Thief, in which you try to take the coveted Shine Sprite from other players and try to keep the shine for 20 seconds to win. There is also Bob-omb blast, where you collect as many Bob-ombs as possible to blow up your opponents. The highest total blow ups wins. These are just two of the five brand new game battle modes. These modes can be played in the



The start page from the screen of a home version of *Mario Kart 8 Deluxe*. Photo by Zachary Myers

same way as the regular races, which include online, offline, and with a friend or family member in the same room.

One new feature is smart steering, which is perfect for younger or inexperienced players. Automatically, this feature will turn on as players are racing, and an antenna will appear

on their kart, preventing the player from going into “bad areas,” such as off the track or in slow sections of the course. To turn this off, pause the race and click L on your controller.

Another auto-enabled feature is auto steering, although this may be a better feature for all players. Usually, racers will

have to press and hold the A button to drive, but with auto accelerate, the system does the driving and you control the rest. To turn this off, pause and press R on the controller. However, I do recommend this feature if you don’t want to strain your thumb.

*Mario Kart cont. on page 7*



Jenna Ortega is the star of *Wednesday*  
Photo by StayTunedNBC: via CC by 3.0

## New, darker spin on an old classic series

By Xochitl Pope

Netflix’s new show *Wednesday* has taken a new spin on an old classic, *The Addams Family*, and reshaped how these beloved characters are portrayed.

Having been directed by Tim Burton, the show delivers a darker take on the characters and settings that are involved.

Jenna Ortega plays the lead character, Wednesday, a girl with a dark persona and an interest in anything creepy who has landed herself in a school for outcasts called Nevermore Academy.

While faced with many challenges, such as being social and having to find a bloodthirsty monster,

Wednesday maintains a cold, distant personality, attributed to the original character in the 1964 version of the film.

In her new school, Wednesday meets many different people such as her roommate Enid and Tyler, a “normy” or normal boy from the local town of Jericho, who seems to take a keen interest in Wednesday.

However, Tim Burton did not forget to include Wednesday’s cherished parents, Morticia and Gomez Addams. He provides an intriguing backstory about the two characters that ultimately makes Wednesday more interested in learning about her family’s past and also brings her a step closer to uncovering the identity

of the monster.

Through different events that happen at Nevermore and Jericho, Wednesday becomes a different person by spending time with new people and developing new skills that help her take down the local monster.

With Wednesday’s hunt for the monster who has been terrorizing the town and school coming to a close, she must figure out who her true friends are and who has been hunting her since she arrived at the academy.

*Wednesday* is rated TV-14. The eight episodes from season 1 are currently streaming on Netflix.

## Before you stream *Enola Holmes 2*, read this!

By Xochitl Pope

Many new movies have come to Netflix, such as *Enola Holmes 2*, the sequel to the much loved first film featuring an impressive cast.

The first film takes place in England and is about the younger sister of Sherlock Holmes who is determined to live up to the family name. This movie is a heartwarming film told from the perspective of Enola, the little sister of the family, and tackles major issues happening at the time by using humor and wit.

The majority of that film takes place in London; however the story starts out in the country where Enola lived with her mother. As the movie progresses, Enola must set out on a

journey to find her mother who mysteriously disappeared on her birthday. Through her journey, she meets different people who help her solve this mystery and help her discover who she really is.

There are quite a few well known actors in this movie and there are even more talented people in the second film. Millie Bobby Brown, who played Enola in the movie, can be recognized from the hit show *Stranger Things*, and she does a fantastic job playing this quirky character.

Enola’s mother, played by Helena Bonham Carter, is not as prominent a character, but when she is on screen she assumes the character’s nurtur-

ing, tough love personality, thereby adding a certain level of charm to the movie.

Sam Claflin, who takes on the role of the mean older brother, appears as an obstacle that Enola must get around in order to solve the mystery of her mother’s disappearance. There are many other prominent actors who each add their own special touch to the film.

With the second movie now available for streaming, it’s important to remember how the series left off in order to enjoy the sequel. With the different characters having their own separate problems that they have to solve, the story ends in a surprising, but satisfying way that leaves the viewer wanting

to know what Enola’s next adventure will be.

Reviewers of the first movie have called it, “absolutely wonderful, quirky and charming.” Rotten Tomatoes gave it a 91%.

The movie seems to have lived up to these reviews since Netflix did decide to create a sequel, keeping Enola’s big personality and curiosity on screen.

Rated: PG-13  
Run time: 2:08  
AVAILABLE:  
On Netflix



Millie Bobby Brown is the star of *Enola Holmes 2*.  
Photo by Laviru Koruwakankanamge, via CC by SA 4.0



## Swift keeps breaking records with her musical career



Taylor Swift is one of the most dominant vocal artists of her generation.  
Photo by Cosmopolitan UK via CC by 3.0

By Amelia McAvoy

On Oct. 21, 2022, Taylor Swift released her tenth studio album. The album contains 13 tracks and the deluxe album, which was released at 3 a.m. on Oct. 22, contains seven additional songs.

While Swift's previous two albums, released in 2020, saw her explore the alternative genre, she returned to pop in *Midnights*. But, each track is incredibly distinct and uses different sounds. There is a little bit of everything on this album.

Tracks like "Bejeweled," and "Karma" are classic pop songs with upbeat music, catchy choruses, and simple, feel-good lyrics. On the same album are tracks like "Labyrinth," and "Sweet Nothing," which feature much softer sounds and romantic, emotional lyrics. Other songs use unique sounds, like the echoing background of "Maroon," the twinkling in "Snow On The Beach," or the modulated voice Swift uses in the beginning of "Midnight Rain."

In addition to featuring various dif-

ferent sounds, *Midnights* also includes many different themes. The album features songs chronicling events and emotions from throughout Swift's life. Swift has revealed that they tell stories specifically of many midnights from her life, hence the title.

The opening track, "Lavender Haze," refers to the rumors that have haunted her current relationship with actor Joe Alwyn. On "Anti-Hero" Swift grapples with her self hatred. "Karma" refers to past feuds she has had in her career with Scooter Braun and Kanye West. Thematically, *Midnights* is intriguing and in many ways feels like a stroll through the singer's life.

However, some of the tracks leave something to be desired in terms of songwriting, which is typically Swift's biggest strength. Some lyrics are convoluted. Others are surface level in comparison to what we've seen her write in her past two albums. This isn't to say there aren't some gems on the album, though. "You're On Your Own, Kid" details the heartbreaking realization of

growing up and realizing the only person you can truly rely on is yourself. "Would've, Could've, Should've" is a bonus track, but one of the strongest songs on the album, exploring the emotions of a younger woman who has been manipulated in a relationship with an older man.

Although *Midnights* isn't one of Swift's strongest albums, in my opinion, it is still a top tier pop album and a lot of fun to listen to. It will be eligible for a Grammy nomination next year.

Once again, Swift proves how dominant she is in the music industry. On the first day of its release, *Midnights* became the most-streamed album in a single day on Spotify. On Nov. 3, shortly after the album's release, Swift became Spotify's most-streamed female artist of all time. Then, she became the first artist ever to hold all 10 spots on the Billboard Hot 100, all with songs from *Midnights*. While many artists' popularity would begin to dwindle after being in the spotlight for almost 20 years, Swift's success just keeps coming.

## Mario Kart 8 Deluxe continued from page 6

The final new feature is smart steering, which allows players to use their controller like a steering wheel on an actual car. Simply pause the race and click Y to enable what is called "tilt controls." This will allow the racer to drive as if they were operating an actual car.

While this feature seems more geared toward experienced players, younger players can use it too. A good way to test this is to use tilt controls and smart steering together so the racer can get a feel of the controls. There are also still basic controls, such as holding ZR for drifting, pressing ZL for item, and holding the left stick to

turn. Overall, this game has many great features to offer new and returning racers.

Last March, Nintendo made the first ever update to *Mario Kart 8*. This update came in the form of a DLC of new cups and it is one of the best things Nintendo has added.

Contained in this DLC are 6 waves jam packed with vintage tracks and brand new tracks from various other *Mario Kart* games.

This DLC is free for those who have a Nintendo Switch Online + Expansion Pack membership (and \$24.99 for others). This update will have six waves released throughout the year until the

end of 2023. With the recent waves, Nintendo also added a rare feature that allows for customizable items in online races, which allows for each player in the race, no matter their position, to get the same item, whether it's just coins or even bullet bills.

I've been playing Mario games for more than 10 years, and while I've loved all of them, this one may take the cake. There are so many great features Nintendo has added, and while sometimes video games get boring over time, the new DLC added to *Mario Kart 8* has made the game infinitely more fun. The new features should keep gamers young and old entertained for many years.



A plethora of choices for gamers.  
Photo by Zachary Myers

## Friends stands the test of time for streamers

By Héloïse Blanc

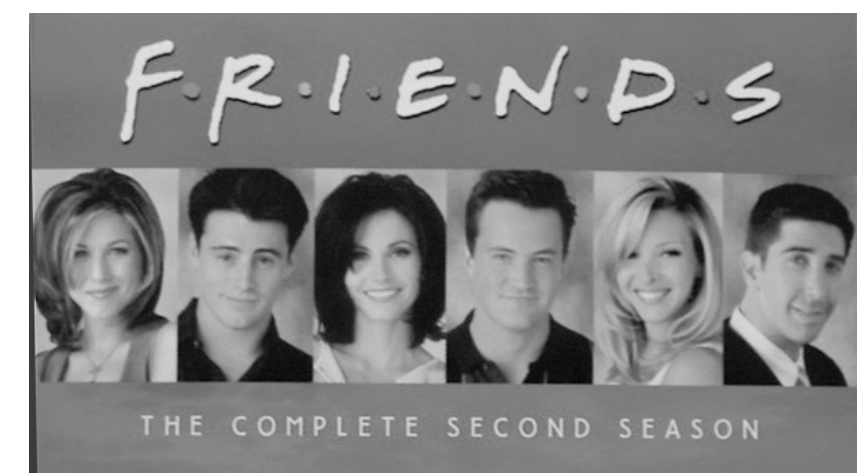
On Sept. 22, 1994, the first episode of one of the most watched TV shows of all time began on the NBC network. At the end of its 10th and final season, *Friends* had been nominated for 62 Primetime Emmy Awards, winning the Outstanding Comedy Series award in 2002 for its eighth season. The show ranked no. 21 on TV Guide's 50 Greatest TV Shows of All Time and no. 5 on Empire magazine's The 50 Greatest TV Shows of All Time.

Almost 20 years later, *Friends* is still entertaining viewers on various channels and streaming platforms. So, why do people keep watching the sitcom even though many other TV shows have been made that are more current and culturally diverse?

Maybe because the plot is simple: six friends living together in the coolest apartments of New York City, spending all their time in a coffee shop, the Central Perk, hanging out together, and laughing.

After watching a few episodes, we dream about Rachel's sense of fashion, Monica's cooking skills, Phoebe's positivity, Chandler's humor, Joey's looks, and Ross's intelligence. We feel they become our friends and we want to live their lives.

The theme song says it all: "I'll be



Friends is still entertaining viewers almost 30 years later.

Photo by Ivan Tortoga, CC by 2.0

there for you." This is the hook of the sitcom, why people are watching it again and again without getting bored. Despite fights, break ups, and even cheating, the six friends have always been there for each other. The series creates a safe place for everyone where we can go whenever we need it, if we want to laugh, cry, or be comforted.

*Friends* is available on multiple channels and streaming platforms around the world. In the United States, you can find it on HBO MAX, a monthly streaming service that charges \$9.99 with ads and

\$14.99 for an ad-free plan. Many other shows with a "*Friends*" spirit, such as *The Big Bang Theory*, *New Girl*, or *How I Met Your Mother*, are also available on streaming platforms. Despite their great stories, they will never surpass the work of art which is *Friends*.

I never thought I could be attached to a TV show to the point that I would watch it 17 times, but here I am, with all the dialogues of *Friends* marked forever in my head. The six New Yorkers are part of my life and I'm not the only one to feel this way.

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# We Ask BE

February 2023

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## What would your ideal Valentine's gift be?

Photos and interviews by  
Charlotte McAvoy and Héloïse Blanc



*"Sour Patch Kids."* Logan Gregor



*"Flowers."* Madie McGlinn



*"Chocolates."* Mr. Andrew Price



*"A dinner at a really nice restaurant."* Mr. Joseph Luchini



*"A spa day or dinner by myself."*  
Ms. Amanda Hayes



*"Breakfast with Kelly Clarkson."*  
Mr. Jaime Alonso



*"Candy, Flynn Rider, and food!"*  
Sophia Gaudiano



*"A French man with chocolates."*  
Paige Savage